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Letter dated 11 September 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the text of the report on the International Pollution Prevention Summit, which was held in Montreal, Canada, from 18 to 20 October 2000 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Commission on Sustainable Development acting as the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

(*Signed*) Paul **Heinbecker**
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 11 September 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Report on the International Pollution Prevention Summit October 18-20, 2000 Montreal, Canada

INTRODUCTION

Preventing pollution from occurring is an approach that has positive implications for most of the themes that will be discussed at the ninth meeting of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. It has an obvious and direct link to reducing pollutant emissions to the atmosphere. Pollution prevention principles require maximizing energy efficiency and developing and using non-polluting energy sources. Important mechanisms for innovative pollution prevention practice are tied to international cooperation as well as to information for decision-making and participation. In many ways, pollution prevention is a cross-cutting issue that has relevance for a large number of the themes found throughout *Agenda 21*.

In October 2000, over 250 senior decision-makers and leading practitioners from over 50 countries, representing all regions of the world, gathered in Montreal, Canada for the International Pollution Prevention Summit. The Canadian Centre for Pollution Prevention and Environment Canada's National Office of Pollution Prevention hosted the Summit with guidance from an international Steering Committee representing pollution prevention roundtables, cleaner production networks and the United Nations Environment Programme.

The Summit was a three-day event that took place immediately following the United Nations Environment Programme's Sixth International High-level Seminar on Cleaner Production. The two events shared the same venue and the timing allowed a number of participants travelling from great distances to attend both.

National and regional pollution prevention and cleaner production roundtables are multistakeholder fora that, as a rule, include representatives from government, business and the NGO community. The majority of pollution prevention activities initiated by roundtables have been national or regional in scope. However, many of the challenges faced by roundtables, as well as most of the benefits of preventing pollution, are global in nature.

The Summit provided an opportunity for national and regional roundtables to explore how pollution prevention could be better understood and implemented as a result of roundtables working together and in partnership with other organizations and agencies.

Outcomes from the Summit included action plans for fostering change, expanding education and awareness, financing and national-level policy development. The Summit also resulted in the launch of the Global Information Network, a cross-regional program linking innovation, ideas, practitioners and decision-makers. The strategic alliances and broad-based partnerships that were developed at the Summit are now driving the on-going follow-up activities.

THE PARTICIPANTS

Summit participants represented countries from all regions. They came from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic; Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong SAR of China, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Korea (Republic of), Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan Province of China, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, United States, United Kingdom, Venezuela and Viet Nam.

Participants were affiliated with a wide range of organizations and agencies including:

members of pollution prevention roundtables and cleaner production networks
senior staff from international organizations (United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Canadian International Development Agency, United States Agency for International Development)
high-level government policy and decision-makers from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America
directors of cleaner production centres in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Europe, Latin America and North America
senior corporate managers from the industrial and financial sectors
community leaders

Project managers, educators and academics, engineers, planners and youth were also among those participating in the Summit.

THE PROGRAM

The program consisted of a combination of keynote speakers, panel discussions and action planning sessions. Marianne Lines, Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Pollution Prevention and James Riordan, Director, National Office of Pollution Prevention Environment Canada welcomed participants, as did Mayor Pierre Bourque of Montréal.

Keynote Speakers

Keynote speakers included:

- Mr Ray Anderson, CEO of INTERFACE Inc, who stressed that pollution prevention is" not just the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do. Businesses that don't move in this direction won't survive";
- Dr Roberta Bondar, Astronaut and Physician, who spoke of how her travel in space reinforced her understanding of the interconnectedness of humans and the natural world; and,
- Mr Oscar Motomura, CEO of Amana Key, a management development centre for business executives in Brazil, who encouraged participants to go beyond conventional problem-solving to arrive at a clearer picture of the many elements that make-up a successful equation for pollution prevention.

Discussion Panels

The panels at the Summit focused on different dimensions of strengthening pollution prevention and cleaner production roundtables. Panel speakers represented all regions and a wide variety of sectors. The topics were:

The Power of Pollution Prevention Roundtables - This panel was chaired by James Riordan, National Office of Pollution Prevention, Environment Canada. Panellists focused discussion on how their respective roundtables are struck, their membership, and their impact on governments and in advancing pollution prevention. Roundtable representatives included Olivia La O'Castillo (Asia Pacific Roundtable on Cleaner Production); Leif Thuresson (European Roundtable on Cleaner Production); Ariel Gustavo Carbajal (Roundtable of the Americas); and Dave Johnson (US National Pollution Prevention Roundtable) .

The Role of Pollution Prevention in Achieving Sustainability -Chaiyod Bunyagidj, Thailand Environment Institute, chaired this panel. Speakers addressed why pollution prevention is not automatically seen as fundamental to sustainability. Ken Geiser, Toxics Use Reduction Institute, acknowledged that there has been little attention to pollution prevention in the international discourse on sustainability. He cited several reasons for the lack of coordination between the movements including:

- sustainable development is about systems while pollution prevention tends to focus on components, seldom generating a comprehensive perspective;
- sustainable development is about equity and pollution prevention remains silent about issues of poverty, social equality and human justice; and
- sustainable development is about consumption while advocates of pollution prevention have championed the ideas of sustainable consumption, with limited practical advice.

Dr. Geiser argued that pollution prevention practitioners could learn from the current approach to sustainability by becoming more systems-oriented and attentive to social factors.
If pollution prevention is to be a driver towards sustainability, Tarcisio Alvares-Rivero, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, urged the audience to find ways to make changes in the way managers, investors and governments make daily decisions. Our challenge is to find out how pollution prevention can be of use to today's business and government cultures.

Expanding the Influence of Pollution Prevention Roundtables - Chaired by Parry Burnap, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, this panel outlined the conditions that would increase the likelihood of organizations working more closely with pollution prevention initiatives. Iza Kruszewska, the Northern Alliance for Sustainability, reviewed the challenges that NGOs face in attempting to work with governments and business on cleaner production. In Europe, the NGOs apply pressure for policy change rather than working with governments to affect improvements. Partnership with business is currently hampered by a "climate of mistrust". Dave Bennett, Canadian Labour Congress, emphasized that pollution prevention and sustainability should go hand-in-hand with green job creation. Carol Carmichael, Institute for Sustainable Technology and Development said that universities must change traditional approaches so that all graduates understand their role in sustainability and leave universities with the necessary tools.

Global Partnership-Strengthening Connections Among All Pollution Prevention/Cleaner Production Organizations - Chaired by Edward Clarence-Smith, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, Austria, speakers on this panel explored strategies for, and the benefits of, establishing closer working relationships among cleaner production centres and networks, pollution prevention roundtables and other organizations with similar objectives. The panellists were Pat Gallagher (New Mexico Environment Department, United States), Surya Chandak (United Nations Environment Programme, France) Brian Robinson (Environment Protection Authority, Australia) and Don Huisingh (International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics, Sweden)

Workshops

Summit participants took part in two days of facilitated action planning workshops on how to move forward on pollution prevention and cleaner production. The challenge was explored from four perspectives: changing behaviour, education, finance, and policy and the role of government.

The workshops offered a unique opportunity to build work plans and commit to action in global partnership. Participants identified roles and responsibilities for realizing actions and considered how the implementation of action plans should be monitored.

OUTCOMES

Global Information Network

One of the key outcomes was the launch of a Global Information Network - a permanent network that goes beyond annual meetings, to truly link practitioners and encourage ideas and innovation.

This Summit outcome has particular relevance for information for decision-making and international cooperation for an enabling environment.

Designed to become a vital new resource for businesses and governments, the Internet-based network will connect and serve as a virtual meeting place for pollution prevention roundtables, sustainability and cleaner production networks and other organizations world-wide that are committed to expanding cleaner production and pollution prevention. It is an evolving network – a partnership between governments, the private sector, international organizations, NGOs and academics that links and supports the cleaner production community while reaching out to new partners such as energy efficiency, finance and sustainable consumption organizations.

Action Plans

Action Plans were developed during two days of workshops that outline priority activities along with institutional and individual commitments to further action. The Action Plans are a combination of bold moves and small steps that have already begun to achieve results through new partnerships and alliances. Promotion of the Action Plans continues throughout 2001 at meetings of the regional roundtables, at the ninth United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development and in 2002 as part of the preparation for Rio+10.

The following is a brief summary of the Action Plans that were developed as a result of the Summit:

Changing Behaviour

Participants explored behaviours that foster or impede sustainability efforts and looked at the ways in which culture influences behaviour. This working group's final efforts focused on actions, change agents and drivers for cultural and behavioural change. Some identified actions included:

- Integrating sustainability concepts into media messages
- Nurturing the creation of charismatic leaders for effective delivery
- Developing a model that demonstrates the social, economic and environmental implications of purchasing decisions.

Finance

Participants' discussions were guided by the premise of the background paper that stated: "*enterprises that integrate cleaner production/pollution prevention into management and day-to-day operations have demonstrated that they can improve their profitability in both the global and domestic marketplace.*"

The group identified priority areas where the environmental community can influence the financial sector to promote a greater adoption of pollution prevention. These included:

- Improving financial and environmental performance measures
- Developing specific market instruments
- Promoting appropriate business planning tools.

Education

If we are to make progress toward sustainable societies, participants felt more must be done in educating and training people at all levels. Educational materials should include both technical and non-technical dimensions of environmental problems and solutions. We must be aware that the goal of education is to build competence for life-long learning in the definition, prevention and solution of present and future sustainable development challenges.

Actions proposed by the group were:

Compiling and updating the inventory of worldwide educational initiatives for on-line access

Designing educational curricula that include pollution prevention frameworks in elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities.

Supporting professional development focused on integrating pollution prevention into work-related tasks in all fields.

Policy

Strategic plans and tools were outcomes of the policy action plan. The strategic plans consisted of the following elements:

- A compendium of pollution prevention and cleaner production policy, legislation and regulations in each country,
- A roundtable action strategy for promotion and integration of pollution prevention/cleaner production policy, and
- Policy guidelines.

The group recommended two main tools– an awards program and increased product/process disclosure to support the design and implementation of the strategic plans.

Youth Perspective Youth representatives who attended the Summit submitted a brief, daily statement on Summit proceedings. They made the following observations:

> People under the age of 20 represent over 40 per cent of the world's population. As future decision-makers, they represent a large proportion of consumer demand. If cleaner production and sustainable consumption are only engaging decision-makers from business and government, we will achieve only one-sided change.
> Pollution prevention should be both an individual and collective responsibility.
> If we want a better environment, we not only have to find technological solutions, but also modify our behaviour and cultural values.

Media Coverage

The Summit generated broad media interest including:

> Coverage in English, French and Spanish
> registered press from around the globe including India, Tunisia, Belgium, Ethiopia, England and Washington
> stories in newspapers across Canada with a total circulation of nearly 1.8 million readers
> 10 radio interviews
> daily internet new wire coverage (Environmental News Service, Earth Times, Southam Press)

The Summit organizers thank all participants and sponsors for their contributions to a solid foundation for future work and co-operation. Continued Summit follow-up will be available at www.c2p2online.com.